

VZCZCXRO9169
PP RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHKP #0519 2540614
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 100614Z SEP 08
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0628
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0099
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1767
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 2579
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 4462
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS KARACHI 000519

SENSITIVE

AIDAC

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#) [SOCI](#) [KOCI](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: HHS SECRETARY LEAVITT'S MEETING WITH THE CHIEF MINISTER OF SINDH PROVINCE

¶1. (U) Summary: Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Michael Leavitt on August 20 met Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Chief Minister, Sindh Province, and selected senior provincial officials. The Secretary discussed the resurgence of polio in Sindh province and steps the provincial government needed to take to control the disease. Secretary Leavitt affirmed the long-term U.S. development commitment to Pakistan and specifically offered HHS technical assistance to attack the polio epidemic in Sindh. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Chief Minister Shah stated that the previous government had "ignored" Sindh, where the people suffered greatly from poverty, economic disparity and crisis - and the people had supported democracy in the last election, despite violence. The new government must address social problems and help people in tangible ways. He acknowledged that Pakistan needed development assistance, especially for public and preventive health.

¶3. (U) Secretary Leavitt affirmed the U.S. commitment to helping Pakistan and maintaining a long-standing friendship. He reported on his discussions in Islamabad about ways of cultivating Pakistan's drug and vaccine industry with Federal Minister of Health Sherry Rehman. He also described his meetings at the Aga Khan University, where he spoke with Pakistani researchers about their efforts to develop innovations to improve health conditions (septel).

Political Life

¶4. (SBU) Secretary Leavitt asked what advice the Chief Minister would give to those trying to organize the coalition government. Chief Minister Shah, who described himself as "one of the most senior politicians in Pakistan" replied that as a member of the PPP and a citizen of Sindh, he would ask them to follow the advice of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto, to focus on education as the basis for development. He said not enough attention went to the social sectors, especially education and health. Secretary Leavitt said he had seen worldwide how civil unrest resulted when people lacked good health care.

Resurgence of Polio in Sindh

¶5. (SBU) Secretary Leavitt asked about progress in the province against polio. The Chief Minister said the government had just launched a new immunization campaign. Provincial Secretary of Health Shafiq Khoso acknowledged that Sindh had eleven polio cases so far this year, above the usual level of 4-5 cases, and praised the participation of the Consul General in supporting the provincial government's polio eradication efforts. Federal Health Ministry Director General Dr. Rashid Jooma said the government's real problem lay in the need to strengthen the management and administration of the immunization campaigns. Secretary Leavitt offered help from HHS to assist Pakistan's polio eradication efforts, especially in Sindh, by providing training for immunization supervisors and to build the capacity of provincial health authorities to manage more effective

immunization campaigns.

16. (SBU) USG officials attending the meeting:

- HHS Secretary Michael O. Leavitt;
- Consul General Kay Anske
- William Steiger, Special Assistant to Secretary Leavitt for International Health
- Kathleen McDonald, Associate Director for Democracy and Health, USAID/Pakistan

17. (SBU) The meeting included the following GOP officials:

- Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Chief Minister, Sindh;
- Syed Sohail Akbar Shah, Secretary to the Chief Minister;
- Fazlur Rahman, Chief Secretary, Sindh;
- Shafiq Khoso, Secretary of Health, Sindh;
- Ayaz Soomro, Law Minister, Sindh;
- Dr. Rashid Jooma, Director General, Federal Ministry of Health, Islamabad

18. (U) This cable has not been cleared by Secretary Leavitt.

ANSKE